

# **John Ashcroft — The Best Man For the Job**

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*The following are recent quotes on President-Elect Bush's nomination of Senator John Ashcroft for the office of U.S. Attorney General.*

"I don't think he's a racist. I think certainly he has taken positions that people in the caucus would disagree with, but that's normal. The President has a right to appoint those who agree with his philosophy to the Cabinet. ... I think it will not be unanimous, there will be votes against him. But when the final count is made, he will be confirmed."

*(Sen. John Breaux (D-LA), on the Ashcroft nomination, "FOX News Sunday," FNC, 1/7/01)*

"Although I must admit that our political and philosophical views could not have been more at odds, as I am a moderate/liberal Democrat, I nevertheless found him to be a very sincere and decent man of high personal integrity. I was always well-treated, and he personally went to bat for me on one particular occasion in a personal matter.

"Additionally I was surprised to read the charges of racism leveled against him, as he appointed a well-qualified African-American friend and classmate of mine as a judge in St. Louis. Conservative, yes; dogmatic, perhaps; racist, never."

*(Stephen D. Landfield, on the Ashcroft nomination, "Chicago Tribune," 1/9/01)*

"So, Democrats have been parsing the nominees' records, not for an evaluation of intellectual discernment and administrative ability, but rather to discover a single act or statement that can be used to defeat them and can be made into a rhyming couplet for Jesse's lemmings.

"Ashcroft, for example, is being viciously attacked as a racist for stopping the nomination to a federal bench of a judge who voted to let a notorious cop killer avoid the death penalty. The judge is black, and so the Democrats are off and running, ignoring that Ashcroft voted to confirm 23 of 26 black judicial appointees during his six years in the Senate and ignoring that, as Missouri's governor, he signed into law a state holiday honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., established Scott Joplin's house as the state's only historic site honoring a black person, named a black woman a state judge and fought to save Lincoln University, which was founded by black soldiers."

*(The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, Editorial, 1/9/01)*

"Former Sen. John Ashcroft is a courageous choice for attorney general. He is principled and not afraid to take unpopular stands. That can be a plus, given that his job will be to uphold the law, even if it means crossing his boss. Despite criticism of Mr. Ashcroft, there is simply no evidence he will not faithfully uphold the law."

*(The Detroit News, Editorial, 1/7/01)*

"John Ashcroft, who was Missouri's attorney general and governor before becoming a senator, has the ethics and experience Reno lacks."

*(Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Editorial, 1/7/01)*

"First, Mr. Bush should squelch the growing lander among black liberals that attorney general designate John Ashcroft is a racist for opposing the federal court nomination of Missouri judge Ronnie White. If Ashcroft is a bigot, he's a pretty lame one, having supported 26 of President Clinton's 28 black judicial appointees. As governor, Mr. Ashcroft named eight blacks to the Missouri bench ... and three others to his cabinet.

Mr. Ashcroft did not reject White's blackness but his views, namely those on crime. Mr. Ashcroft's objection was no more about skin color than were Joe Biden's and Ted Kennedy's votes against Clarence Thomas in 1991. ..."

*(Deroy Murdock, The Washington Times, 1/7/01)*

"As the Bush administration prepares to assume power, it is also difficult to imagine two more honorable public officials serving as the nation's highest-ranking law-enforcement officers than Attorney General-designate John Ashcroft and FBI Director Freeh."

*(The Washington Times, Editorial, 1/7/01)*

"But there is absolutely no evidence in a long and distinguished public career that Ashcroft will fail to uphold our nation's Constitution and laws faithfully and conscientiously. Nor is there any historic or constitutional justification for opposing a Cabinet nominee on the basis of deeply felt religious convictions - - convictions shared by millions of Americans.

"Just a short while ago, Vice President Al Gore was widely applauded for selecting as a running mate Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, an outspoken and deeply committed Orthodox Jew. The same groups that threaten to oppose Ashcroft because he harbors strong religious views, and may be perceived as more conservative than the president he will serve, did not oppose Lieberman, who could easily have been described in the same terms. The difference, of course, is that Lieberman is a liberal and Ashcroft is a conservative."

*(Theodore B. Olson, The Baltimore Sun, 1/7/01)*

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